

1. Narrative Descriptions (EFN: Narrative .pdf)

a. Detailed Project Description

Project Summary

Project goal is to restore watershed functions (capture, storage of water in soil, and beneficial release) and health to 700 acres (SNC portion) of forest at the base of Big Valley Mountain near the community of Bieber, California, as well as to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Other partner funds will be used to complete the project.

Project Objectives/Outcomes

- Assist in restoring the Region's physical and living resources
- Aid in the preservation of working landscapes
- Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires
- Create a renewable energy source through the production of biomass fuel
- Reduce soil erosion and loss through restoration of rangeland and forest ecosystems
- Protect and improve habitat for sensitive wildlife and plant species
- Improve water quality and increase spring flows
- Assist the Regional economy

Environmental Setting and Impacts

Project encompasses private timber and range lands consisting of mixed conifer, black oak, sagebrush steppe, and riparian/meadow habitats. It is adjacent to BLM managed land. Kramer Ranch is a working cattle ranch that has experienced the same western juniper expansion that can be witnessed throughout the west. Fire suppression and rangeland management practices over the last 150 years have resulted in the rapid expansion of western juniper into neighboring plant communities causing considerable concern because of increased soil erosion, potential reduced stream flows, reduced forage production, altered wildlife habitat, changes in plant community composition, structure, and biodiversity, and replacement of mesic and semi-arid plant communities with juniper woodlands. The treatment prescription will return the forest to its historic climax condition.

b. Workplan and Schedule

Project work consists of the thinning of overstocked pine stands, targeting small and suppressed trees, and the removal of invasive western juniper. Material will be removed by shears and then chipped and hauled to a biomass fuel facility where it will be used in the production of clean renewable energy. Proceeds from the chip sales will be used to partially pay for the treatments. CalFire Conservation Crews will provide follow-up hand treatments in areas where mechanical equipment cannot operate.

Within 90 days of grant agreement execution (project start date) the project area will be flagged and bid solicitations will be prepared. The selection of a contractor will be made shortly thereafter. It is expected that work will begin within 6 months after the project start date and it will be completed by month 18, allowing for normal winter weather shutdown periods.

Photo monitoring points will be set-up prior to the commencement of treatment. After work has been completed additional photos will be taken to document our work. After all treatments have been completed GIS layers of the completed work areas will be prepared for the Lassen County CWPP Base Map and for submittal to SNC.

	Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
5.b. Workplan Table																				
Treatment area layout		■	■	■																
Prepare bid solicitations				■																
Setup photo monitoring points (pre-treatment)				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Contractor selection				■																
Conduct Treatments (some winter shut down)							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Post treatments photo monitoring								■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Month 6 progress report								■												
Month 12 progress report													■							
Prepare completed treatment GIS files																			■	
Final progress report and closeout																				■

c. Restrictions, Technical/Environmental Documents and Agreements

No extraordinary restrictions have been placed on this project. Cultural resources and rare and sensitive plants will be protected with the assistance of Registered Professional Foresters. A CalFire exemption that is effective 5 days after mailing will be filed prior to treatment. The exemption will be valid for a 12 month period. Therefore it needs to be filed just prior to commencement of the treatments and cannot be filed at the time of this application. This is the procedure we have used in our past SNC projects. Copies of the forms are included with this application. No additional permits are required.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

The project is exempt from CEQA per Article 19: Categorical Exclusions, Section 15304: Minor Alterations to the Land

Lassen County provides Title III Secure Rural Schools Act funding to the Lassen County Fire Safe Council to apply for and administer funding for fuel reduction projects. Therefore, the Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services determined that they have discretionary authority to act as the lead agency in the CEQA process for this application. The Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services filed a Notice of Exemption with the Lassen County Clerk (see attached Notice).

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):
Project is not subject to NEPA.

d. Organizational Capacity

PRCD employs a Business Manager who handles day to day activities and also serves at our bookkeeper. All other work is furnished by independent contractors, including a Watershed Coordinator and a Project Director who manages our terrestrial projects. We also contract for Registered Professional Forester Services, Biological and Botanical services (including monitoring) and Cultural Resource/Archaeological services. All our contracted staff works closely together to successfully implement our projects.

The majority of our treatment work will be accomplished through a Licensed Timber Operator who will be hired through a competitive bidding process. CalFire Conservation Crews will assist with hand treatments.

We have treated and restored over 10,000 acres in Lassen & Modoc Counties over the last 10 years. We have completed and are successfully managing several SNC funded projects. In 2010 we completed a 3.5 million dollar NRCS Conservation Innovative Grant that restored over 4,000 acres. We are in the final year of our 2.8 million dollar NRCS Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) that will restore another 4,000 acres. We have completed all our projects on time, within budget and treated significantly more acres at lower costs than initial estimates. In summary, PRCD has the expertise and capacity to complete the Kramer Ranch Project.

e. Cooperation and Community Support

Our project was developed as part of the collaborative Modoc & Lassen County Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). It is the #2 priority in the Modoc County CWPP. The Lassen County CWPP is unique in that it incorporates a formal Memo of Understanding (MOU) executed by Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Lassen County, 3 National Forests, 2 BLM Field Offices, CalFire, NRCS, local Fire Departments, Tribes and 4 Private Timber Companies, together known as the CWPP Working Group which meets annually. This project came to the forefront over the last two years through our CCPI outreach efforts.

We are including letters of support from:
Lassen County Board of Supervisors
Modoc National Forest
Bureau of Land Management, Alturas Field Office
Honey Lake Power
Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District
Susanville Indian Rancheria
US Fish and Wildlife Service

f. Long Term Management and Sustainability

In their current condition the forest stands within the project area are not sustainable and would be severely impacted, if not eliminated by a wildfire, and are currently being impacted by disease from drought and overstocking.

The long-term objective of the project is to return the project area to pre-settlement conditions characterized by open forests dominated by large pines (Ponderosa and Jeffrey) with relatively few trees per acre compared to current stocking levels. It will take hundreds of years to reach this goal, but following project treatments, the stand within the project area will have the historic stocking level and species composition necessary to produce a healthy forest ecosystem. Minimal management will be needed every ten to fifteen years to sustain this condition. The long-term management necessary to remain a healthy stand may include reintroducing a fire regime to the landscape in order to restore the role of fire in the ecosystem and periodically reduce ladder fuels and forest debris.

The property is a working cattle ranch with a keen emphasis on wildlife. Adaptive range management will continue to be implemented to ensure our restoration treatments are sustained.

g. Performance Measures

We will report quantities and/or values of the following performance measures:

Performance Measures for all Categories

i) Number of People Reached

The Pit RCD will provide updates on our website, <http://www.pitriverralliance.net/pitracd/> regarding project implementation and successes. The project will also be featured in our quarterly newsletter and a field tour.

ii) Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada

The Pit RCD has a successful track record leveraging funds and we will leverage additional resources beyond those included in our budget.

iii) Number and Type of Jobs Created

Project will preserve and create forest products sector jobs.

iv) Number of New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities

Project will help preserve our forest products sector, renewable energy production activities and ranching, all of which are suffering in the region.

b) Performance Measures Specific to Project Type

i) Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity Maintained or Created

The biomass developed from this project will create renewable energy kilowatts.

ii) Changes in tree canopy cover, density and composition to a greater dominance of eastside pine and a canopy cover of less than 50%

PRCD will collect pre- and post-treatment data to document changes in tree density and composition to demonstrate that forest condition goals following treatment have been met.

iii) Number of forest and meadow acres restored

GIS layer will be delivered to SNC documenting the number of acres restored.

Appendix B3

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PROPOSITION 84 - DETAILED BUDGET FORM

Project Name: Kramer Ranch Forest and Meadow Restoration Project

Applicant: Pit Resource Conservation District (PRCD)

SECTION ONE DIRECT COSTS	Year One	Year Two	Total
<i>Project Management Costs</i>	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$30,000.00
<i>Travel</i>	\$4,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$6,000.00
<i>Site Restoration Work Costs</i>	\$177,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$277,000.00
Registered Professional Forester Services	\$4,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$6,000.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
DIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	\$205,000.00	\$114,000.00	\$319,000.00

SECTION TWO INDIRECT COSTS	Year One	Year Two	Total
<i>Monitoring & Performance Reporting</i>	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$3,000.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
INDIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$3,000.00
PROJECT TOTAL:	\$207,000.00	\$115,000.00	\$322,000.00

SECTION THREE Administrative Costs (Costs may not to exceed 15% of total Project Cost) :			Total
<i>*Organization operating/overhead costs</i>	\$17,802.00	\$9,890.00	\$27,692.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
ADMINISTRATIVE TOTAL:	\$17,802.00	\$9,890.00	\$27,692.00
SNC TOTAL GRANT REQUEST:	\$224,802.00	\$124,890.00	\$349,692.00

SECTION FOUR OTHER PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS	Year One	Year Two	Total
Portion of Western Staes WUI Grant to be Applied to SNC Project Area	\$50,000.00		\$50,000.00
Estimated Chip Proceeds Applied Toward Treatment Costs	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$200,000.00
Landowner In-kind Project Assistance	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
Cal Fire Conservation Crew Hand Treatments	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$20,000.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
Total Other Contributions:	\$165,000.00	\$115,000.00	\$280,000.00

NOTE: The categories listed on this form are examples and may or may not be an expense related to the project. Rows may be added or deleted on the form as needed. Applicants should contact the SNC if questions arise.

* Operating Costs should be allocated to the percentage that is applicable to the grant based on your cost allocation methodology and cannot exceed 15% of your total project costs.